some years. Thus, in Portugal, Hebrew printing began in 14:78, but non-Hebrew only, seven years later, when the first Latin book appeared (no work irTthe Portuguese language earlier than 1495 is known)[1]. Indeed, of the twenty-four known books printed in Portugal before 1500, the first eleven are in Hebrew.

When the Jews were driven out of this country in 1497, they took their skill and their equipment with them: and various Hebrew works are extant printed at Fez shortly after—notably an edition of the liturgical guide, *Abudrahim.* This is the earliest book printed in the whole of the African continent. Similarly, the first book printed in the Balkans was the Hebrew Code of Rabbi Jacob ben Asher (Constantinople 1493); and the earliest work printed by the European method in Asia is a comment-ary on the Book of Esther, published at Safed, in Palestine, in 1577. At Cairo, where a European press was started only in 1798, during Napoleon's expedition, a Hebrew press had been active as early as 1557.

It was not only in Hebrew printing that Jews were active. Notwithstanding the efforts made to exclude them from honourable walks of life, a few managed to become jsngaged^ in secular work. Thus, Abraham Zacuto's Almanac and astronomical tables were published by Abraham d'Orta at Leiria in 1496, in two editions —Latin and Spanish. The latter is noteworthy, as it is the only incunable printed in Portugal with

the text neither Latin, nor Portuguese, nor Hebrew. At the beginning of the following century, Girolamo Soncino was active as a publisher in Northern Italy, mainly in Latin and Italian. He was at pains to search out manuscripts in order to establish the best texts, his edition

[1] There is, indeed, a vague and probably inaccurate reference to a book of 1490, but even this is some time after the initiative had come from the Jews.